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CLAIMS THREE-WAY SPLIT IN ALBANIAN COMMUNISTS

Moscow's policy toward Albania has been the subject of considerable interest ever since the rupture between the Cominform and Tito. The situation is now expected to crystallize following the re-establishment of normal relations between Greece and Yugoslavia.

A week ago, a US news agency reported that secret negotiations were taking place in Rome between an Albanian delegation and British and Greek delegations. The report was immediately denied by the governments concerned. Although it was admitted that there was an Albanian delegation in Rome, it was asserted that this was composed of merchants who had come to Rome solely for private commercial transactions. These reports, however, seem to confirm the fact that there has recently been great unrest in Albania and that strong opposition to the present regime has appeared.

While the problem has thus been closed officially, there are other indications that the Albanians have been restless for some time and that they wish to enter into relations with the West. This situation has become clearer since the Yugoslav-Greek rapprochement and since the spread of rumors to the effect that Moscow will abandon the country to its own fate. There have been reports that Enver Hoxha, the Albanian dictator, went to Moscow to beg for food or, according to another report, for military forces to quell the atmosphere of revolt which has appeared in the country. These reports, which preceded the one about the secret negotiations in Rome with the Westerners, indicate quite clearly the internal situation in Albania.

Actually, the Albanian Communist Party is split into three factions. One group led by Enver Hoxha is blindly attached to Moscow. A second group is in favor of enforcing a type of nationalistic Communism which has become known as Titoism. The latter group opposes the introduction of any Soviet-type innovations and desires the abandonment of the kolkhoz system, which has not been successful in Albania from the beginning and which is dragging the country into economic disaster. It is understood that the struggle, which has caused frequent armed clashes in Albania and which has placed the Hoxha regime in such a difficult position, is between these two groups.

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The third group, which has been successful in securing government positions as a result of the weakness of the regime, favors an orientation toward the West. Members of the Ministry of Commerce and the Central Bureau, who were included in the delegation reported in Rome, are known to be members of this group.

The West's reactions to this political and economic confusion and unrest in Albania can be conjectured. There are those who say, keeping in mind the difficult economic conditions in the country and the fact that hunger is dominant in some parts, that now is the time to woo the country away from the Iron Curtain with economic aid. It is understood from Belgrade's insistent statements that it has not entered into negotiations with Hoxha and that it does not wish to intensify its dispute with the Kremlin by aggravating this Albanian problem. Similarly, the Western powers have no desire to become embroiled in the Adriatic, thereby disrupting the comparative quiet of the Balkans, before completely clarifying their relations with Yugoslavia and before settling the Trieste problem -- Mucahit Topalak

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